(a) whether Gulf Air and other International carriers are being allowed equity participation with private operators at the cost of national airlines ;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that international carriers are not permitted to fly in domestic sectors in advanced countries like USA, UK, France as also in SAARC countries ; and

(c) if so, why India is resorting to a policy leading to drainage of large sums of foreign exchange out of India from the share of national carriers ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) An investment proposal by M/s. Jet Airways that they may be owned by Tailwinds Limited, a company incorporated in the Isle of Man, in which Gulf Airways and Kuwait Airways would hold shares upto 40% and the balance would be held by NRI, has been approved by the Government.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The benefits accruing out of equity participation are higher as compared to the outflow of foreign exchange.

Losses to Indian Airlines due to strikes

3891. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the losses suffered by Indian Airlines because of strikes in 1992-93 ;

(b) the alternative travel arrangements made for the travelling public and the role played by each private operator during the strikes in Indian Airlines ; and

(c) whether the Open Sky Policy of Government has justified its existence ; if so, the details of incentives/facilities planned for them in the next three years ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) Indian Airlines suffered a loss of Rs. 47.97 crores on account of strikes during 1992-93.

(b) During the period of strike from 10th December, 1992 to 25th January, 1993, Indian Airlines operated a contingency schedule based on operation of flights by Executive pilots, Vayudoot aircraft and wet leased aircraft from M/s. Uzbekistan Airways and M/s. Balkan Bulgerian Airlines. Air Taxi operators also increased their operations during the strike period and carried a much larger number of passengers.

(c) 21 permits have been issued to Air Taxi operators out of which 18 are operating flights on the domestic Sector. Fresh Guidelines has been issued as of 1-3-94 for Scheduled Domestic Operators. No specific plan for 3 years has been prepared for incentives/facilities for Air taxis/scheduled domestic operators.

Representations against non grant of advance increments in Air India

3892. SHRI E. BALANANDAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Air India has received representations from its employees with regard to non grant of advance increments to some of them who resigned from Central Government to join Air India ;

(b) whether Government have issued any instructions/guidelines to Air India to settle such representations ;

(c) since how long such representations are pending ; and

(d) when will the same be considered ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to Government guidelines employees joining Air India after resignation from Government are to be treated as fresh recruits and their pay regulated according to rules of Air India.

(c) and (d) Representations received from time to time are disposed of in accordance with Government guidelines.

Voluntary Retirement Scheme in Air India

3893. SHRI E. BALANANDAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) how many applications were received by Air India as on date for voluntary retirement under the scheme introduced in Air India for officers and other employees :

(b) the details of such applications accepted and rejected with reasons therefor ;

(c) how many applications are pending as on date, and the reasons therefor ;

(d) whether this scheme was changed any time after its introduction ; and

(e) if so, why and what are the changes ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) Air India received 113 applications from Officers/Staff for voluntary retirement in terms of the Voluntary Retirement Scheme introduced in December, 1988.